

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AMERICAN WEST EXHIBITION OPENING IN PRAGUE

1. THE RIDING HALL OF THE 17TH CENTURY VALDSTEJNSKY (WALLENSTEIN) PALACE IN PRAGUE HAS SEEN ITS SHARE OF MOUNTED MEN IN ITS LONG HISTORY, BUT RERELY THE SORT WHO NOW LINE ITS WALLS IN THE PAINTINGS OF THE "AMERICAN WEST" EXHIBITION WHICH OPENED THERE, AUGUST 10.

2. THE COWBOYS, INDIANS AND PIONEERS OF THE "WILD WEST," AS PAINTED BY SUCH PREMIERE 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN ARTISTS AS REMINGTON, RUSSELL AND CATLIN, ARE THE SUBJECT OF THIS FIRST MAJOR AMERICAN ART EXHIBIT IN PRAGUE IN RECENT YEARS. THE PAINTINGS ARE ACCOMPANIED BY DISPLAYS OF THE EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING OF THAT COLORFUL ERA, AND BY A SLIDE SHOW SCREENED ON THE SAME PREMISES DURING THE HOURS OF PUBLIC SHOWING.

3. THE AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF FORT WORTH, TEXAS, CONTRIBUTED A MAJOR SHARE OF THE 71 PAINTINGS ON DISPLAY, ALONG WITH FOUR
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CENTRAL EXHIBITS OF WESSTERN ARTIFACTS. THE TEXAS MUSEUM COORDI-

NATED COLLECTION OF OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE EXHIBIT CONTRIBUTED BY OTHER U.S. MUSEUMS AND COLLECTORS. THE PRAGUE SHOWING IS JOINTLY SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, THE CZECH MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND THE PRAGUE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

4. AT THE FORMAL OEPNING CEREMONY TODAY, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA ALBERT W. SHERER, JR. DREW THA ATTENTION OF THE 300 GUESTS TO THE COINCIDENCE IN TIMING OF THE 19TH CENTURY AMERICAN DISCOVERY OF ITS NATIONAL IDENTITY REFLECTED IN THE EXHIBITION, AND A SIMILARLY SIGNIFICANT AND LASTING 19TH CENTURY REDISCOVERY OF THEIR OWN NATIONAL IDENTITY BY THE CZECH AND SLOVAK PEOPLES. IN HIS REMARKS, AMBASSADOR SHERER NOTED, "THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES DATES FROM THAT TIME OF PRIMAL BEGINNINGS."

5. "WE ARE ALL PRODUCTS OF OUR PAST," HE SAID, "AND IT IS FROM AN UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORICAL PROGRESSION THAT WE CONTINUE TO FORGE OUR RESPECTIVE NATIONAL IDENTITIES AND ASPIRATIONS. WE SHOULD NOT TURN AWAY FROM OUR PAST. WE SHOULD REVEL IT IT. AND, WHEN ONE IS CONFRONTED WITH THE SORT OF COLORFUL PAGEANT PORTRAYED IN THESE PAINTINGS, IT IS ALL THE MORE EASY TO FIND RENEWAL OF MIND AND SPIRIT IN THE PAST."

6. IN ADDITION TO PARTICIPATING CZECH MINISTRY OF CULTURE REPRESENTATIVES, THE CEREMONIES WERE ATTENDED BY DEPUTY FORIEGN MINISTER MILOSLAV RUZEK. MRS. CARL V. DEAKINS, SECRETARY OF THE AMON CARTER FOUNDATION, HEADED A DELEGATION OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE AMON CARTER MUSEUM.

7. THE "AMERICAN WEST" EXHIBITION WILL CONTINUE ITS SEVEN-WEEK SHOWING IN PRAGUE AT THE VALDSTEJNSKY PALACE SHOWROOM OF THE NATIONAL ART GALLERY UNTIL LATE OCTOBER, WHEN IT WILL TRAVEL TO POLAND. A LATER CZECHOSLOVAK SHOWING, IN BRATISLAVA NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART AS LOCAL CO-SPONSORS, IS SCHEDULED FOR FOUR WEEKS BEGINNING IN EARLY 1975.
SHERER

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